

*Interviewee 1:* Yeah I said yeah. I understood too many questions.

*Interviewer:* What would you use it for?

*Interviewee 1:* Huh?

*Interviewer:* How would you use it if you got it?

*Interviewee 1:* Well I need to practice up on some speeches I'm going to make and then when you go over that and practice up with it you don't have no trouble with going on with it.

*Interviewer:* That's true. When are you going to be giving speeches?

*Interviewee 1:* Huh?

*Interviewer:* When are you going to be giving speeches? What for?

*Interviewee 1:* I don't know yet. See when I went to Washington, the White House Conference, I should have had it then. When I was the delegates at the White House Conference.

*[skips]*

*Interviewer:* ..morning, I borrowed it from somebody so. So I don't know. I think they cost about \$60 if you bought it. What's so good about it you know with most tape recorders you have the two reels and you have to do it up*[inaudible]*.

*[skips]*

*Interviewee 1:* One stayed put, I'm trying to think what his name is but he's dead now, he used to be called a mean boy. *[crosstalk]* Um he's chief here and I know one colored fella killed another one and he went to \_\_\_\_\_ without a bench warrant because if he got a '32 or '20 and it's that or a rifle I don't want to take no chances going against them in the woods under no circumstances. And I could see where you were right.

*Interviewer:* Yeah.

*Interviewee 1:* I'm setting up there watching you come up and I let you get as close as I want you and then I just leave you there.

*Interviewer:* Because when I talked to Mr. Litterall - I talked to Mr. Litterall yesterday - and he was in the state police for a while.

*Interviewee 1:* Did you talk to Mr. Litterall because he was a state police?

*Interviewer:* Yeah that's what I said. And he told me - you won't remember it because it is before you came - but there was a massacre down in Matewan and he was real good friends with a guy who sat in on that trial for the 16 men who were tried for that shoot out. So he was telling me about that. It was real interesting. You didn't hear anything about that.

*Interviewee 1:* No. No more than he told.

*[skips]*

*Interviewer:* Do you mind if I use my tape recorder?

*[skips]*

*[inaudible]*

*Interviewer:* Okay let me put this in here. But umm they came here in 1904. Isn't that interesting?

*Mary Ghiz:* Mhm. Yeah. They're both dead now. I have two brothers that are dead.

*Interviewer:* And what and you grew up here then? And when were you born?

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah. Nineteen seven or nineteen eight.

*Interviewer:* Yeah.

*Mary Ghiz:* I was born on the hill. I think, I think they called it Gang Hill.

*Interviewer:* Now what we are interested in finding out about is what it was like being a miner before the union came in here.

*Mary Ghiz:* Oh well. My father didn't work in the mines. He had the first confectionary in Logan.

*Interviewer:* Confectionery?

*Mary Ghiz:* He made his own candy. Let me take my \_\_\_\_\_ in this. I'll come back to talk.

*Interviewer:* Oh okay.

*[skips]*

*Mary Ghiz:* They used to fight. We lived down on Dingus Street in a big house and one day my father was gone out of town. They brought machine guns in and they put them across the street from our house. And we were scared to death.

*Interviewer:* Now why did they do that?

*Mary Ghiz:* Because that's before the union came in. People were mean.

*Interviewer:* What were they doing with the machine guns?

*Mary Ghiz:* They were going to kill people if they caused trouble.

*Interviewer:* If they tried to organize?

*Mary Ghiz:* Uh-huh.

*Interviewer:* Now who was it that had those machine guns? Who hired those people?

*Mary Ghiz:* I guess the people that weren't union then were who hired them.

*Interviewee 3:* They didn't want a union.

*Interviewer:* Those were the owners of the coal companies that were doing this.

*Interviewee 3:* No well some of them was.

*[crosstalk]*

*Mary Ghiz:* So my father was gone and he came home one night and he knocked on the door and mother said, "Who's there?" and he said, "It's me." She was scared to death that someone of the ones that had the machine guns were coming and he said, "No let me in." So he came in and locked the door. She said, "Good thing you are home I was worried to death we'd get killed before you came back."

*Interviewer:* Was anyone killed that day?

*Mary Ghiz:* No. Huh-uh. But they were trying to scare people out then.

*Interviewer:* I've heard that. Did you know stories of anyone being killed by those detectives?

*Mary Ghiz:* No. Huh-uh. There weren't anyone killed but they were scaring everybody to death. And that's why no one signed up for the union after that. I don't know what year but I know they signed up for the union.

*Interviewee 3:* It was a good bit before they got one. I don't know when it was either.

*Mary Ghiz:* They used to kill one another. I know when my father had a confectionery store before he was -

*Interviewee 3:* Your father was a miner wasn't he? Wasn't he? My husband was a miner.

*Mary Ghiz:* So before he could start business he went to, he used to go on the road and travel and sell dresses and they'd carry all them things and our sheriff then was Don Chafin and he said, "Mr. Ghiz if you are going down the road you are going to have to have a paper and if anybody asks you tell them I told you." So one day he went on the train - it was the first train they had in Logan - and he was going to Holden. And a man to the back of him said, "Do you have the papers to sell?" He said, "Yes Don Chafin told me I could sell." And when they was getting off the train the man shot him in the back. And he fell but it took a year before they could find the bullet in his back.

*Interviewer:* I don't understand. Why'd he shot your father?

*Mary Ghiz:* Because he didn't have the paper. You have to have the paper. What kind of paper? You have to have the paper saying you were a peddler.

*Interviewer:* So in other words your father, if Chafin didn't like you, you couldn't do anything.

*Mary Ghiz:* No. Huh-uh. But he was a good friend of dad's and he was, after my father came in 1904 he was the first person he met, Don Chafin. And he was so, it took a year before they found a bullet in his back. He went to Huntington, St. Mary's Hospital, and there was a doctor there who said. "Do you have a wedding band Mr. Ghiz?" And papa said, "Yes I do" and he said, "Give me the ring and I will show you where the bullet is." [crosstalk] And he took the ring and he placed it there and it was where the bullet was. And he took it out. I don't know what year. Nineteen six? Nineteen seven? I don't know.

*Interviewer:* What ever happened to Don Chafin?

*Mary Ghiz:* He's, he's dead. He died a long time ago.

*Interviewee 3:* Mr. Chafin?

*Mary Ghiz:* Don Chafin.

*Interviewee 3:* Yeah I knew of him.

*Interviewer:* Did you hear any stories about Chafin?

*Interviewee 3:* No I don't know very much about

[crosstalk]

*Mary Ghiz:* Everybody liked him. He helped all the, he had helped all the foreign people when they came to this -

*Interviewer:* Foreign people?

*Mary Ghiz:* We're Arabian, Syrians. He helped. He helped pawpaw with his business.

*Interviewer:* Now when did your family come over from Syria?

*Mary Ghiz:* Nineteen four.

*Interviewer:* They came over from Syria then.

*Mary Ghiz:* Nineteen four.

*Interviewer:* Did they speak English then?

*Mary Ghiz:* No. They learned after they come here.

*Interviewer:* Why did they come over here?

*Mary Ghiz:* Well my fathers brother come here first and they wrote to him and told him that business was good in Logan so they came.

*Interviewer:* Was your, did anyone in your family work in the mines?

*Mary Ghiz:* No.

*Interviewer:* They just all went into business?

*Mary Ghiz:* Mhm.

*Interviewer:* Uh huh. Did you make Syrian candy like?

*Mary Ghiz:* Uhh, I, no. I have a cousin that makes a Syrian pastry. There in Toya

*Interviewer:* Huh.

*Mary Ghiz:* But you can order Syrian candy from New York.

*Interviewer:* Hmm. Now you said your husband was a miner? Is that right?

*Interviewee 3:* Yes.

*Interviewer:* Can you tell me, was he a member of the union?

*Interviewee 3:* No he died just before they were trying to get it in.

*Interviewer:* When was that?

*Interviewee 3:* That must have been about 1926 or something like that because we had moved together in '25 and they was fighting on Blair Mountain then. I guess it was 1926 or something like that. And those were pretty tough times and they, he died before they ever got it in.

*Interviewer:* Did he die in the mines?

*Interviewee 3:* Yes he got hurt in the mines and died from the accident. Got his back broke. 'Fore the union, 'fore the union got in, 'fore the social security got in. Anything like that. He had gone.

*Interviewer:* Now did, had he worked to organize a union? Did he want a union?

*Interviewee 3:* Well no, he wasn't against it but he wasn't working. No he wasn't working. But he wasn't against it.

*Interviewer:* Did he fight in the battle of Blair Mountain?

*Interviewee 3:* No he did not. No he did not fight.

*Interviewer:* But did they come around and ask him to fight?

*Interviewee 3:* Huh?

*Interviewer:* Did they come around and ask him to fight?

*Interviewee 3:* Well I don't know whether they did or not. I can't remember that.

*Interviewer:* You know Mr. Martin here was telling me about how Chafin would come around and offer people money if they would fight against the miners that were coming down to organize.

*Interviewee 3:* Yeah well I don't know nothing or seen no more about it then I did. Because we knew \_\_\_\_\_ they'd just begin, the crowd was coming in and trying to keep them from coming in and organizing. But I don't remember my husband working it any. I think he didn't. I can't remember things going back so much.

*Interviewer:* Yeah it was a pretty long time ago.

*Interviewee 3:* Yeah it's been a long time. A long time.

*Interviewer:* Right.

*Mary Ghiz:* What are you taking this for the paper?

*Interviewer:* No we just, we decided that nobody, it seemed like nobody had written anything down about his history and we thought we should like talk to people who remembers.

*Interviewee 3:* You want to get the history right

*Interviewer:* Yes exactly like people are going to forget it and they won't know what happened

*Interviewee 3:* This is true.

*Mary Ghiz:* One year -

*Interviewee 3:* Because I done forgot a whole lot myself.

*Mary Ghiz:* One year they sold the annual book. I forgot what the name of the book was. They had my daddy's picture in it and his brothers and what kind of store he had and what kind of store they had. And it's very interesting. If I ever find it I'll let you look at it.

*Interviewer:* You don't remember what the name of the book was?

*Mary Ghiz:* It was something about the city of Logan. It had all the restaurants, the clerks, and pictures in it. And someday I will look for it and bring it for you to see it.

*Interviewer:* Is it possibly a book by Howard Lee called, I think it's called *Struggle in Appalachia*? There's a book that I found by this author.

*Mary Ghiz:* Huh-uh. Does it have pictures in it?

*Interviewer:* Lots of photographs

*Mary Ghiz:* Maybe. I don't know if my dad is in it or not. His name is John Ghiz and Harvey Ghiz and Bill Ghiz.

*Interviewer:* How do you spell that?

*Mary Ghiz:* G-H-I-Z

*Interviewer:* G-H-I-Z?

*Mary Ghiz:* G-H-I-Z

*Interviewee 3:* Ghiz

*Interviewer:* Well I'll look into my book and see if he's in there.

*Mary Ghiz:* It might be in there.

*[crosstalk]*

*Interviewer:* Yeah. Do you remember any other times when you were frightened by the detectives there with the guns?

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah. We were very afraid, very afraid to get out of our house. Afraid we'd get shot.

*Interviewer:* Even when, even if you were a friend of Don Chafin's?

*Mary Ghiz:* Well he didn't act, but if mother wanted to go down the street she'd go down but she'd lock the door and leave us in the house. I was sick all my life and I'm just now getting well. I had Typhoid Fever and left me with dizzy spells. When I went to school children made fun of me and I couldn't help it if I was sick. One day a boy hit me in the head with a swing. So teacher made him stay in for a week after that.

*Interviewer:* That seems fair.

*Mary Ghiz:* Mhm.

*Interviewee 3:* You've already been a long time hadn't you?

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah. I'll be 65 years old February 1st.

*Interviewer:* Do you know how people felt, feel about the union around here?

*Mary Ghiz:* They didn't like it much. But as soon as they signed up they liked it better. There's no more trouble after they signed up. But there were a lotta trouble before they signed up. I think everybody is union around here now.

*Interviewer:* Yeah that's pretty true. Do you remember much about John L. Lewis? Or did you ever see Mother Jones?

*Mary Ghiz:* Mother Jones?

*Interviewer:* You've never heard of her? She was an old union organizer.

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah I think I remember. Was she in Logan?



*Interviewer:* Yeah she organized the miners in New York.

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah I think I've seen her. I may have seen her. May not have. I know Mr. and Mrs. John Rife was union. They're both dead now. I think she started the union. Mrs. Rife did.

*Interviewer:* Do you remember people talking about John L. Lewis?

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah. I've read about him in the papers a lot.

*Interviewer:* Hmm. Did people around here admire him?

*Mary Ghiz:* I think they did. Most of them that were miners. He was a good leader.

*Interviewer:* Do you know of any old union members around here that I could talk to this afternoon?

*Mary Ghiz:* Why don't you talk to Charles Hilton? I bet he'd tell you a lot.

*Interviewer:* Charles Hilton?

*Mary Ghiz:* Mhm. At the Banner.

*Interviewer:* Okay.

*Mary Ghiz:* I bet he'd tell you a lot of things.

*Interviewer:* And he works at the Logan Banner?

*Mary Ghiz:* Yeah.

*Interviewer:* And he was around back then?

*Mary Ghiz:* I don't know when he came but I think he knows a lot about the union, the miners.

*Interviewer:* Well that would help me a lot. That would be good to talk to him you think? Okay.

*Mary Ghiz:* He'd tell you about all the Ghizes.

*Interviewer:* Well thanks. That was an interesting story you told me there.

*Interviewee 3:* You've been a long time.

*[skips]*

*Otis Kinser:* No ma'am.

*Interviewer:* Let's put this here.

*Otis Kinser:* I didn't have any education.

*Interviewer:* Well, that's okay. Did you, were you a member of the United Mine Workers when they came in here in 1933?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am.

*Interviewer:* Now did you try to organize a union before then?

*Otis Kinser:* Ma'am?

*Interviewer:* Did you try to organize a union before then?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am. I worked over in Kanawha county before the union. I don't remember what year.

*Interviewer:* You worked in a mine over there?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am. Never worked nothing in my life. Only in and around mines. Truck driver and stuff like that.

*Interviewer:* When did you go into the mines for the first time?

*Otis Kinser:* Well I will soon be 72 years old and I went to work -

*Interviewer:* 72?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am. And I went to work in the mines when I was 13.

*Interviewer:* Uh-huh. 13? Oh thank you that's very nice. 13 years old.

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am.

*Interviewer:* And what'd you do then? What did you work at when you first went in?

*Otis Kinser:* I trapped in the mines. They had trappers then. The don't have them now.

*Interviewer:* Yeah.

*Otis Kinser:* The mines would look funny to me now. What they got to work with. What they have to work with when I was a miner. I've not worked since -

*Interviewer:* It's real different.

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am. I've not worked since, uh, since 1955. I have a heart condition.

*Interviewer:* Uh-huh. Do you want to um *[inaudible]* Can you tell me - now people have told me stories about Don Chafin and how he organized to keep the union out of this country. Out of this county.

*Otis Kinser:* I can't tell you too much about him because I was - I know he tried to keep it out. He was paid to do it.

*Interviewer:* Why?

*Interviewee 5:* Hello.

*Interviewer:* My name is Anne Lawrence and I was sent over by Charlie Hilton of the Logan Banner and we are going to be writing a story.

*Interviewee 5:* Oh.

*Interviewer:* On what it was like before the union came down here. In the coal mines.

*Interviewee 5:* Oh well.

*Interviewer:* Just talking to elders about it.

*Interviewee 5:* Daddy used to work with Charlie. Did he tell you that? Did Charlie tell you that?

*Interviewer:* Yeah Charlie said to come down here. I haven't - we are just collecting some old stories about what it was like.

*Otis Kinser:* I kindly taught Charlie -

*Interviewer:* That was back before your day.

*Otis Kinser:* I kindly taught Charlie to work.

*Interviewer:* Oh yeah.

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am.

*Interviewer:* Woah.

*Interviewee 5:* Here Pierre! Come here.

*Interviewer:* He's a pretty cute little dog.

*Interviewee 5:* Yeah he's, he sure is friendly. Daddy, are you sure you taught Charlie to work?

*Otis Kinser:* I taught him the work he done in the mines. Because I worked with him.

*Interviewer:* Now he told me he used to work in the mines. You were there when he -

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah I, he'll hear what I say. He'll know I'm telling the truth.

*Interviewee 5:* His voice isn't very strong.

*Interviewer:* That's okay.

*Interviewee 5:* Can it pick up on him?

*Interviewer:* Yeah I think so.

*Otis Kinser:* Go ahead and -

*Interviewee 5:* Specially sometimes with daddy if he is a little bit excited he whispers.

*Interviewer:* You want to tell me what work you did in the coal mine?

*Otis Kinser:* Maam?

*Interviewer:* What work were you doing in the coal mines?

*Otis Kinser:* Well I done practically everything in the coal mines. But boss. I never did do that. Labor.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. And did you ever, were you ever an officer of your local?

*Otis Kinser:* No ma'am.

*Interviewer:* You never did that?

*Otis Kinser:* Huh-uh.

*Interviewer:* What were interested in is finding out something about Don Chafin. And uh -

*Otis Kinser:* Well I knew Don Chafin.

*Interviewer:* You knew Don Chafin?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am. But I never had any dealings with him. You know what I mean?

*Interviewer:* Yeah. What kind of umm -

*Interviewee 5:* Anna! She'll be here in a minute, baby.

*Interviewer:* What did he do in this community?

*Otis Kinser:* Ma'am?

*Interviewer:* Did you want to tell me some more stories about Don Chafin? Did you know about what service he gave?

*Otis Kinser:* What I know about Don Chafin, I was just acquainted with him. I know he made lots of money. I do know that.

*Interviewer:* Did you know that when he retired - somebody told me that he had a million dollars.

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah he made lots of money.

*Interviewer:* Yeah he made lots of money.

*Interviewee 5:* He was the sheriff of Logan county wasn't he? Don Chafin?

*Interviewer:* Yeah he was sheriff down here.

*Otis Kinser:* He was the boss of Logan county.

*Interviewee 5:* Was papa a deputy under him?

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah.

*Interviewer:* Who was that?

*Interviewee 5:* My husband's stepfather. He's dead.

*Interviewer:* He was deputized?

*Interviewee 5:* Yeah. With Don Chafin.

*Interviewer:* Do you know what work he did?

*Interviewee 5:* No I don't. I have a picture somewhere where he has his gun sticking out from under his coat. He just had on plain clothes you know. And I know that he was a deputy. Before that I don't know. Anything *[inaudible]*

*Interviewer:* Cause Chafin organized a lot of people. To keep the union out of Logan county. He didn't want the union in here.

*Otis Kinser:* No ma'am. He made big money doing that.

*Interviewer:* That's what I heard.

*Interviewee 5:* He opened a coal company himself didn't he.

*Interviewer:* I don't know, did he?

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah.

*Interviewee 5:* Did he daddy? Did he own a coal company? Or own big shares in it?

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah. He owned one mine. I don't remember the name of it. Chafin was the coal company is all I know.

*Interviewer:* Hmm. Do you want to tell me what it was like working down in the mines?

*Otis Kinser:* Ma'am?

*Interviewer:* Do you want to tell me more about what it was like working in the mines?

*Otis Kinser:* Well it's just you never see anything only machinery. At all. You're in the dark. Course you had a light.

*Interviewer:* Did you work with other people down there?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes ma'am.

*Interviewer:* In crews like?

*Otis Kinser:* I worked with - I couldn't tell you how many people I worked with. Cause I worked so long. From 13 to 55. In and around the mines. And all the work Charlie, Charlie Hilton, ever done around the mines I worked with him. On coal \_\_\_\_\_

*Interviewer:* What were you doing out there?

*Otis Kinser:* Dropping coal cars. With a break. A hand break. You know dropping them in and out to tip them.

*Interviewer:* Right. Do you want to tell me like when you joined the union in 1933?

*Otis Kinser:* That's when it first came in here.

*Interviewer:* Yes. Now how did people join up? Were there big meetings they went to or what was that like?

*Otis Kinser:* Ma'am?

*Interviewer:* Well when you join the union did you go to a big meeting like and everybody joined up?

*Otis Kinser:* No ma'am. The way I, the way I joined I just signed my name on a paper you see.

*Interviewer:* Yeah? The organizer came down and he signed you up.

*Otis Kinser:* Yeah he took the list you see and followed me and I signed the paper you see. And it was - it's been a long time I about forgot everything I knew.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. I know it has.

*Otis Kinser:* But the hard work - I havent forgot that. I went to work sometimes at 5 o clock in the morning and worked until 11 o clock in teh night for somsetimes less than \$3 a day. Worked that long for less than \$3.

*INterviewer:* After the union came in did you get overtime pay then? Was the pay better?

*Otis Kinser:* Ma'am?

*Interviewer:* Was, were you, did you get more pay after the union came?

*Otis Kinser:* Yes, yeah. Sure.

*Interviewer:* So all the guys wanted to join the union when it came.

*Otis Kinser:* Yes all the money we made, the biggest part of it, all the raises we got was after the union came in you see? Before the union came in, instead of getting pay raises we got a pay cut.

*Interviewee 5:* Well who was responsible for sending in big car loads of apples and cereal and something like a lot of these? Who was responsible for that? Because I can remember eating.

*Otis Kinser:* Well it was the government.

*Interviewee 5:* That was the government? I didn't know whether it was the union.

*Interviewer:* When was that?

*Interviewee 5:* It was back when I was just, I barely can remember it.

*Interviewer:* Was this during the Depression?

*Interviewee 5:* I was born during the last of the Depression, I was born in '33. And I could remember the groups of men, they came, they would say - what did they call that car? *[crosstalk]* They would say it was there. And I can barely remember, Daddy brought home a big poke of apples and how good they tasted and that awful tasting bread because it was it hadn't been bleached. It was brown wasn't it.

*Otis Kinser:* Yellow corn.

*Interviewee 5:* Yellow corn. And it tasted, it tasted awful. Even the cereal wasn't too good but it was, it was too.

*Interviewer:* Yeah it was food.

*Interviewee:* Yeah it was food.

*Interviewer:* So those must have been really hard times. Like before, like in the first few years of the thirties.

*Interviewee 5:* They must have been because I can remember my aunt telling me about my mother would get a loaf of bread and that would tickle everybody to death. That she could buy a loaf of bread. I guess when they got enough money to buy a loaf of bread, and she would give everybody one slice. Fold the top up real good and put it back away. And until later and then she'd give everyone one more slice. And my aunt I can remember her not too long ago telling me that. Fresh, store bought bread tasted better to them. It seems odd.

*Otis Kinser:* You know you're talking to the recorder don't you.

*Interviewer:* Well that's alright. It's a recorder.

*Interviewee 5:* It's just a true thing.



*Otis Kinser:* I know, I know. I just wanted to tell you.

*Interviewee 5:* They was talking about, you know when families \_\_\_\_\_.

*Interviewer:* Now my parents tell me what they did during the Depression. When they were little kids. So it's very interesting. They were living in a car, an automobile, for a while. They had this big automobile that the father had made that was almost like a camper but they didn't have campers back then. But he sort of made this thing and they were just living in that for a while. Out of their house.

*Interviewee 5:* Well I guess we never saw daddy. Of course I don't remember, you know, that, because like I said I was born during the last of it. But I never will forget the \_\_\_\_.

*[End of Audio]*